

From Brickwalls to Goldbars

By

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I have enjoyed membership with the Yamhill County Genealogical Society for many years. I have learned so much from so many talented people which has allowed me to progress in my Ancestral Research.

I have in the past shared how important it is to use the Message Boards that are free on the Internet. I have received many, many exciting bits of information from this use. From just the basic sharing of names and dates of a distant cousin's family, to the 'goldmine' find of the lifetime. I have been blessed many times over.

I cannot express the importance of searching, reading, and replying to trees and query's on these message boards.

Now I mentioned searching the trees and message boards. You can just go about reading the trees and message boards for your specific family surname waiting and hoping and that is all great – fine and dandy way of viewing these query's. Many amateur genealogists do not go on Ancestry.com and view the family trees and find possible family ties. These genealogists are missing the opportunity to go from a 'brick-wall to a gold bar'.

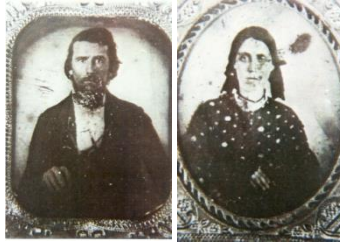
I can't share enough with the reader how important this is to take the step to find distant cousins instead of waiting for them to find you. Case in point. I will use my family as an example. I am sure there are some of you that have the same family situation as I have.

My family on my Father's side of Edwards / Barneycastle and my Mother's side of Charf / Edmonds all came from the east to Oregon in the 1920's through the 1930's. They all left their family's to come west and all of the photographs and items of historical and genealogical that existed when I started my research in the 1990's were from what was passed down from my grandparents to their children. Basically to put it bluntly, nothing.

When I started my research it did not take me long to realize how little my family had recorded and saved about their family history. Pictures are one thing that my family was very much thin on. I have been blessed with distant cousins finding me and me finding them with the end result being a photographic goldmine.

I purchased a three month membership on Ancestry.com as I usually do every year to see what I might find. I have been searching for a family line, a branch of the Edwards line. Specifically my Great Grandfather James Philando Edwards sister Amanda Edwards Patterson Dixon. Amanda's family could not be found past her in old age. I was viewing possible matches in my family tree where I found a family tree which had mention of a Amanda Edward(no 's'). This ended up being the Amanda that I had been looking for. Usually this would mean that I would find a branch of the family with a few names and dates and possibly a picture or two, if I was lucky.

I emailed this owner of this family tree and he contacted me to share that were indeed related. What I found out later in our email conversations was that this was the find of a lifetime for this amateur genealogist!



My Great Grandfather WSE Edwards and my Great Grandmother Mary Willet

The above two photographs were a goldmine find back in 1993. I have always been very proud of these two photographs. I would have never thought that any other find would ever shadow this find.

My newly found cousin mentioned to me that he had many photographs of my Edwards. This is how he put it. I asked which pictures he had and he told me that he had many of WSE and many others that he was sure were related but did not know who they were. I asked him to send these to me via email and what I got about floored me....

One photograph was of an Owen Edwards, my 3rd Great Grandfather Edwards, younger and older photographs of WSE Edwards and an unknown female. The unknown female ended up being my 2nd Great Grandmother Mary Willet Edwards. I was floored once again. He has many more photographs of people in front of homes ect.. which I have not received as of yet.

I share with you the photographs which I was blessed to receive copies of. If I can share any suggestion to my fellow amateur genealogist. Just don't read the queries and family tree's on the internet.

Contact these people who submitted the information they might take you away from your Brick wall and hand you a gold bar. Keep digging and NEVER GIVE UP! JJE



Owen Edwards born 1806 Sullivan County Tennessee.

Buried Davis County Iowa



WSE Edwards
Born 1829
Sullivan County
Tennessee.
Buried
Appanoose Co.
Iowa



Mary Willet
Edwards b.1831
Virginia
Buried
Appanoose Co.
Iowa